

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet **DATE:** 16th July 2018

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WARD(S): All

PORTFOLIO: Cllr Carter –
Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport

PART I **NON-KEY DECISION**

REFERENCES FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY – CYCLE HUBS

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to ask Cabinet to consider the recommendation of the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel (25th June 2018).

2. Matters for resolution from Cabinet

The Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel made the following recommendation at its meeting on 25th June 2018:

- That a recommendation be made to the Cabinet to make a decision on the long term viability of the Cycle Hubs scheme.

3 The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Corporate Plan

3a Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy (SJWS) Priorities

The provision of the Cycle Hub and the resulting increased use of bicycles as opposed to private transport supports the following priority of the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy:

- Improving mental health and wellbeing.

3b Five Year Plan Outcomes

The provision of the Cycle Hub also supports the following Five Year Plan outcome:

- Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs.

4 Other Implications

(a) Financial

The capital costs of the Cycle Hire and Hub service were paid up front by the Local Sustainable Transport Fund in the period between 2012 – 16. However, the original plans to fund the operation and maintenance of the service through sponsorship have not been realised. As a result, the provider of this aspect (Groundworks) have been focused on maintenance rather than the promotion of the service. Funding has subsequently been secured from the Department for Transport promote the scheme; this funding will end in 2020.

(b) Risk Management

Risk/Threat/Opportunity	Mitigation(s)	Recommendation
The Cycle Hub service continues to be operated in a manner lacking long term viability	Department for Transport funding to promote the service secured until 2020	Cabinet asked to make a decision on the long term viability of the Cycle Hub service

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no legal implications to the content of this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

It is not necessary to undertake an Equalities Impact Assessment at this stage. Any future changes to the provision of the service may require an assessment as appropriate at the time.

5 Supporting Information

5.1 At its meeting on 25th June 2018, the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel took an item on the Cycle Hire and Hub service. The information provided to the Panel, and matters considered, included:

- **The present level of usage** – the figures for the financial year 2017 – 18 were as follows:
 - 126 bicycles used from the Cycle Hire service
 - 125 bicycles used from the Cycle Hub service

These levels of usage led to concerns over the plans for the future of the service.

- **The history of the service** – this focused on the financial situation discussed in section 4a and the impact the limited user base has had on the funding of the service.
- **The present situation** – this outlined the current facilities available in Slough. As reported to the Panel, these consisted of the following:
 - 11 docking stations
 - 172 docking points
 - 51 bicycles
 - 80 secure spaces for bicycles in the hub.
- **The future of the service** – this highlighted the impact of the current operating costs and the possibility of returning operations in house. The issues which could drastically improve the present situation were as follows:
 - Sponsorship – this could increase in attractiveness as the planned development and growth of the Borough continued.
 - Planned pilot schemes – these could increase usage by the young, unemployed or community groups. However, whilst this could increase the impact of the service it would be unlikely to generate revenue.
 - The future model – a ‘point to point’ model of cycle hire could be used to replicate systems in operation in Berlin and Amsterdam (amongst other cities).

5.2 The discussion of the above points expressed concern over the operation of the service. Given the fact that, combined, the level of usage was said to be 251 bicycles hired over a one year period, the Panel expressed the view that either the scheme itself was inoperable or was viable but not being used properly.

5.3 Given this, the Panel also raised questions regarding the future plans. Whilst creating a future model similar to those in major European cities may be a proposal with some merit, members questioned the infrastructure of Slough and the degree to which this made that ambition deliverable. The Panel was also not convinced that the plans to raise sponsorship in the future were based on sufficient evidence. As a result, it was not possible to make any future plans on the basis they would be realised.

5.4 Given this, the NCS Scrutiny Panel has requested that Cabinet take a view as to the future viability of the service. Whilst this is not a call for the service to be ended or mothballed, the Panel did not feel that the present state of affairs was tenable and that the proposals for the future lacked detail.

Officer’s Response

5.5 The information provided to the Panel on 25th June 2018 contained a number of inaccuracies which understated the use of the Cycle Hire and Hub schemes. The Cabinet is requested to note that:

- In total there were 406 registered Cycle Hire users since November 2013. This figure has gone up and down since the launch with some members leaving, possibly due to leaving the borough or changing workplace etc. and there are now 330 users.
- In terms of the hub, there are 282 registered users.

5.6 The historic and present levels of usage are significant higher than stated to the Panel and increased year on year. The position is as follows:

Year	Number of Hires	Total Minutes	New sign ups
Nov 2013-14	70	9432	-
2014-15	1074	126218	-
2015-16	2259	322183	-
2016-17	2256	572331	34
2017-18	3042	287582	63
Apr 18 - 17th June 2018	699	68395	40

5.7 In terms of the facilities available in the Cycle Hire scheme, there are:

- 11 docking stations – with a further 6 stations coming forward in this year making it 17 docking stations.
- 172 docking points – this will increase to around 220 docking points this year.
- 100 bicycles – plus potentially a further 20 bikes to come.
- 80 secure spaces for bicycles in the hub.

5.8 The Cabinet is requested to note the updated usage and registration figures to those provided to the NCS Scrutiny Panel, and consider any further measures to promote the scheme to Council staff, local residents and businesses to increase both the registered users and the usage of the scheme.

6 Comments of Other Committees

The report on the Cycle Hub and Hire service had not been taken by any other committees at SBC. It is publically available in the agenda papers for the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel's meeting on 25th March 2018 (item 12).

7 Conclusion

The Cabinet is requested to decide upon the recommendation outlined in section 2 and discussed in sections 5.1 – 5.8 of this report.

8 Appendices

None.